

MEDIA, PA – In honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day, which takes place annually on the third Friday of September, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) paid tribute to an extraordinary group of American Veterans – former prisoners of war (POW) and service members missing in action (MIA). Congressman Sestak, who served in the Navy for 31 years rising to the rank of 3-star admiral, is the highest ranking former military officer to serve in Congress. Today, he called for a renewed commitment that, as a nation, we continue to stand behind all our Veterans, honor the special sacrifices made by our POWs, and ensure that no soldier is ever left behind in combat.

“We must never forget the service and sacrifice of the hundreds of thousands of POWs and MIAs. Even in their darkest hour, these men and women relied on their core values and loyalty to their family, faith, fellow soldiers, and their country in order to maintain the will to survive,” said Congressman Sestak. “I am proud to be a member of this unique brotherhood and sisterhood, committed to preserving the legacy of the men and women who have served our nation and to ensuring that Veterans and current soldiers receive the respect, dignity and care they deserve.

“Today, I commend those who commit their lives to serving our Veterans such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and various organizations like the American Ex-Prisoners of War. In addition, we must thank those who dedicate their lives to achieving full accountability of our servicemen and women, such as those in the Department of Defense around the world who have shown a steadfast resolve to locate, identify, and bring home each and every one of our missing soldiers. Just last month, after 18 years, the remains of Navy pilot Michael Scott Speicher, the only soldier listed as MIA from Operation Desert Storm were identified and brought home. We must never forget how great Americans like Captain Speicher as well as Ralph Galati, a Vietnam POW from Wallingford, Pennsylvania willingly put nation above self to protect our freedom.”

“The men and women who serve our Veterans are fulfilling Abraham Lincoln’s pledge to care for ‘him who has borne the battle, and his widow and his orphan,’ stated Congressman Sestak. “Day in and day out, they work to redeem the debt we, as a nation, have to our Veterans. But it is the duty of all Americans to honor, respect, and support these men and women, both individually and collectively.”

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, the Congressman was the first Director of Deep Blue, the Navy’s anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the Global War*

*on Terrorism. He served as President Clintons Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Congressman Sestak is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*